

SUBJECT	Local Recycling Centres (bring sites)
REPORT OF RESPECTIVE CABINET MEMBER	Environment Portfolio Holder, Cllr Mike Smith
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Head of Environment, Chris Marchant
REPORT AUTHOR	Waste Policy & Project Team Leader, Daniel Sexton
WARD/S AFFECTED	All

1. Purpose of Report

This report considers the future provision of recycling centres (bring sites), which the authorities provide.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Services Overview Committee support the recommendation to close the remaining eight recycling centres and seeks to advise Cabinet of future direction for this service.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 In recent years, officers have undertaken strategic reviews of the public recycling centres it operates, in consultation with Members and key stakeholders. The kerbside recycling collection offered to residents of the three districts is of a high standard and a wide range of recycling opportunities is presented to each household. The relative importance of the recycling banks in terms of recycling tonnages has therefore dramatically diminished.
- 2.2 A report from the Joint Waste Team covering the three districts in the Joint Waste Partnership was presented to the 3rd October meeting of the Joint Waste Collection Committee (JWCC). The report recommended to JWCC the closure of all recycling Centres banks within the three council areas and also recommended that reports be presented to the three Council Cabinets seeking authorisation to close the sites in their respective districts
- 2.3 Recommendations have previously been made for the closure of various individual sites for reasons that included miss-use, contamination of materials, fly tipping, litter issues, safety concerns, and lack of use.
- 2.4 In Chiltern, Wycombe and South Bucks, eight sites remain in each authority and there is now an opportunity to review them, ahead of the commencement of the new Joint Waste Collection Contract for the three authorities in Spring 2020. This report is specific for each authority.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

The removal of the eight recycling centres located in Chiltern District is recommended for the following reasons:

- (a) Residents can effectively access all the recycling streams (and more) offered at recycling centres, including larger pieces of card that arise from mail order packaging, through the kerbside collection service (extra recycling).
- (b) The benefits delivered by the recycling centres in terms of useful recycling and convenience for residents are now not proportionate to the costs of collection and sorting of material, the need for clearance of spillages and fly tips and the cost of disposal of contaminated material.
- (c) Due to increases in residential property numbers, resources for collection of bulk bins at flatted developments are overloaded with rising levels of complaint due to irregular collections. The removal of the recycling centres will release resource, provide resilience and could bring financial savings in the current contract, which has 16 months to run. The freed up resource can be used to support bulk bin collections at flatted developments and to improve the reliability of this service
- (d) The removal of all recycling centres across the three districts will simplify the procurement process currently underway for a new waste collection and street cleaning contract, which is due to commence in spring 2020.
- (e) Where the recycling banks occupy parking spaces or reduce access in car parks, removal will lead to reduced pressure on car parking spaces at some locations and may increase revenues.
- (f) The quality of the material collected from the recycling centres is generally poor and difficult to control. Looking forward we want to ensure the authorities are in the best possible position with reduced contamination and improved quality, ahead of the new joint waste contract commencing.

4. New Joint Waste Service

4.1 It is proposed that the current kerbside recycling service will remain unchanged in the new contract. This covers food waste, paper and cardboard, dry mixed recyclables (mixed cans, plastics, foil, mixed glass bottles, food cartons such as tetra pak) textiles, garden waste and batteries. Reasonable amounts of oversized card are also collected as side waste if it is flattened and folded to a manageable size and presented neatly.

4.2 Procurement work is well under way for the next joint waste collection and street cleaning contract and this presents an opportunity to try and reach a common position across all three districts with the discontinuation of council operated recycling centres throughout. In common with most contract procurements it is felt that costs are likely to rise and making service changes such as this are a way of mitigating potential increases without significantly reducing future service levels.

5. Current Position

- 5.1 Further work has been conducted with partner organisations to improve access residents have to recycling facilities, providing a simple and convenient kerbside collection service. This includes residential developments in Little Chalfont and Chesham.
- 5.2 Other closures have taken place and recycling performance has not dropped, demonstrating that the closures have not had a negative impact. Complaints about the recycling centres and associated anti-social behaviour have reduced.
- 5.3 Local policies have been reviewed and modified to enable extra recycling to be collected at the kerbside. This has been further reinforced through recent publications including the new waste collection calendars and accompanying myth busting information.
- 5.4 BCC recently concluded a public consultation on proposals for a reduced service at its operated Household Recycling Centres (HRCs). Their preferred option is to close facilities at Bledlow Ridge and Burnham. In addition, reduced operating days at three sites and the option to introduce charging systems for non-Buckinghamshire residents, will enable the authority to make substantial savings to service costs. It is anticipated that service changes will be implemented by April 2019. JWCC have responded to the consultation and decision on the future of the HRCs does not affect the recommendations presented in this report.

5.5 Table 1 – remaining CDC recycling centres

No	Location
1	Amersham – Rickmansworth Road car park
2	Chesham – Watermeadow car park
3	Chesham – Cameron Road allotments
4	Little Chalfont – Snells Wood car park
5	Chalfont St Peter – Church Lane car park
6	Chalfont St Giles – Blizzards Road car park
7	Great Missenden – Link Road car park
8	Prestwood – High Street car park

- 5.6 It is recognised that some residents with a modified waste containment solution do not have the ability to present extra recycling at the kerbside for collection, above the capacity of the single use sacks issued. This includes properties which front directly onto high streets. We are committed to identify practical solutions in collaboration with the contractor to overcome those issues. The Joint Waste Team would undertake to communicate such arrangements with stakeholders, on finding practical solutions.

6. Consultation

6.1 Cabinet Members for Environment from each of the three southern districts have been consulted at Joint Waste Collection Committee (JWCC).

6.2 Local stakeholders will be notified of the decision.

7. Options

7.1 *Close remaining recycling centres – recommended*

Implement a closure programme after the Christmas holiday period.

Negotiate with Serco provision of additional resource, to support the current front line services for flatted collections/communal sites.

Mitigate risks associated with material ownership and minimise service cost increase for the new joint waste contract.

8. Corporate Implications

8.1 Anticipated annual savings due to the closure of all remaining recycling centres are approximately £164k (based on annual sums in the Bill of Quantities and other on-going service costs). This is applicable to the current Joint Waste Contract for CDC and WDC.

8.2 One off costs associated with ad hoc cleansing works and making good of sites are estimated to be £10k.

8.3 The anticipated additional cost for the support and improvement of the bulk bin collection service is estimated to be approximately £149k (applicable to the current Joint Waste Contract for CDC and WDC). Therefore, this proposal is expected to be cost neutral for Chiltern District Council for the remainder of the existing Waste Collection and Street Cleaning contract.

8.4 Requests from residents for additional kerbside containers can be met from existing resources.

8.5 Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA 1990), the Council does not have a legal duty to collect waste using recycling centres. It does however have duty to collect household waste from domestic properties although the frequency of collection is not specified. There is also a legal duty under S45A of the EPA 1990 to collect a minimum of two streams of recyclable household waste, separate from any residual household waste, from the kerbside. The proposal in this report does not therefore impact upon any waste or recycling collection duty that the council currently has.

8.6 Contractual change notices and other arrangements will be managed by the Joint Waste Team with advice from Chiltern District Council Legal Services if this is necessary.

8.7 Contract management officers will negotiate to secure a suitable new collection vehicle resource for the bulk bins service, for deployment when the recycling centres no longer require servicing by the existing vehicle.

9. Links to Council Policy Objectives

This recommendation contributes to the following headline shared objectives:

- Delivering cost-effective, customer-focused services
- Striving to conserve the environment and promote sustainability

And links with the following themes from the Joint Sustainable Community Strategy:

- Sustainable Environment - *Minimise waste by reducing usage, reusing and recycling as much as possible; Keep public places clean, tidy and litter free, working together to tackle fly-tipping*
- Safe Communities - *Reduce the incidence and impact of anti-social behaviour in our community; Improve road safety to reduce the risk of death or serious injury from transport incidents,*
- Health and Wellbeing - *Improve connectivity by improving parking*

10. Next Steps

10.1 If the recommendation is approved, working to a project plan, the Joint Waste Team would undertake to notify local stakeholders of the decision taken to close the remaining recycling centres in their areas. Support to access services would be provided to residents in need. Any closure programme would commence after the Christmas holidays and catch up period for kerbside refuse and recycling collections.

10.2 The Joint Waste Team will work closely with colleagues from the Communication Team to develop and deliver a clear and effective strategy.

10.3 As with previous experience of recycling centre closures, some residents may come forward once publicity starts as they don't have access to kerbside recycling services. If this happens, officers can assist by working out solutions with the contractor, and by providing new appropriate containers and recycling information as support.

Background Papers:	Recycling Centre Recommendation – report to JWCC October 2018
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